

HEADWEAR PIECE WITH SELECTIVELY VIEWABLE ORNAMENTATION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to headwear and, more particularly, to a headwear piece with coordinated ornamentation that is strategically situated to give an observer different messages depending upon his/her viewing perspective.

BACKGROUND ART

Designers of headwear are constantly seeking out different designs to both a) incorporate desired information and b) produce an aesthetically unique appearance. These goals have been prevalent in the sector of the industry that produces baseball-style caps. The baseball-style cap has achieved popularity amongst a wide range of users in many diverse environments. Whereas baseball-style caps were at one time worn principally for their functional design, this type of headwear has become a staple for an increasingly large percentage of the population. The baseball-style cap is now commonly seen adorned with messages that may be informational or commemorative, serve an identification function, perform an advertising function, etc.

The baseball-style cap remains extremely popular at sporting events, including the baseball arena at which this type of headwear earned its identity. Souvenir stands at baseball games are routinely stocked with baseball-style caps with logos for the teams participating in an event at hand, as well as all teams participating in a conference or league. The most common adornment on this type of cap is a single team logo or name prominently displayed on the front of the crown. The assignee herein did, at one point, offer a children's cap with multiple teams randomly distributed around the front, side, and rear of the crown of the cap.

In some game formats, players from multiple teams play on each of the participating teams. For example, all star games are common in conferences and leagues at all levels, the most recognized of which is the All Star Game for Major League Baseball. At this time, each league in Major League Baseball in the U.S. has in excess of ten teams. At the mid-season All Star Game, players from most, if not all, teams represent either the American or National Leagues.

Heretofore, it has been common to offer baseball-style caps at all star games as souvenirs with a single message on the front of the crown. Major League Baseball has designed, or had designed, various logos which are commonly used to identify its All Star Game. These logos, appearing prominently

on the front of the crown, generally do not distinguish between National or American league teams, nor do they recognize any specific teams in either league.

There has been an interest in touting the Major League Baseball All Star Game on headwear while at the same time coming up with a format that allows 5 recognition of individual teams, thereby appealing to souvenir hunters and their partisan interest in a particular team. In the absence of this, sales are anticipated to be lost to those looking for a souvenir that has an identification of a particular team, apart from the overall event in which that team is participating. This problem is not peculiar to Major League Baseball, or baseball itself. Events such as this 10 are held at all levels, ranging down to little league baseball, as well as other sports. This same issue also extends to non-athletic events, such as academic competitions amongst schools, etc. In spite of the fact that sales would be lost by not recognizing individual teams or participants, those organizing special league events, such as all star games, have continued to place logos on the baseball 15 style caps focused only on the event, rather than the participating teams or players.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In one form, the invention is directed to a headwear piece having a crown with an exposed external surface having a front, a rear, a right side, and a left side.

The crown has a surface for embracing a wearer's head to maintain the headwear piece in an operative position on the wearer's head. The crown has a) a front/right side octant; b) a right side/front octant; c) a right side/rear octant; d) a rear/right side octant; e) a front/left side octant; f) a left side/front octant; g) a left side/rear octant; and h) a rear/left side octant. The first information identifying an event is on at least one of the front/left side and front/right side octants. The second information identifying a plurality of participants in the event is on at least one of a) the right side/front octant; b) the right side/rear octant; c) the rear/right side octant; d) the left side/front octant; e) the left side/rear octant; and f) the rear/left side octant.

In one side, the second information is situated so that the second information is not identifiable viewing the headwear piece from a front elevation perspective.

The second information may be situated so that the second information cannot be seen viewing the headwear piece from a front elevation perspective.

In one form, the headwear piece has a brim/visor projecting forwardly from the crown.

Third information may be provided on the visor related to the event.

The second information may be an identification of each of the plurality of participants in the event.

In one form, the identifications each are a logo associated with a team.

In one form, the first information identifies an all star event, the third information identifies one of a plurality of divisions of teams participating in the all start event, and the second information is in the form of identifications of teams participating in the all star event in the one division of teams.

5 The exposed external surface of the crown may extend continuously in an inverted cup shape.

In one form, the crown has a top opening through which a wearer's head projects with the headwear piece in the operative position on the wearer's head.

10 The first information may identify a non-athletic event.

In one form, there are a plurality of logos located in at least one of the octants.

In one form, the plurality of logos in the at least one octant have a normal orientation and are skewed from that normal orientation.

15 The logos may be randomly oriented in the at least one octant.

In one form, the second information is defined by producing embroidery directly on the crown.

In one form, the logos are provided on each of a) the right side/front octant; b) the right side/rear octant; c) the rear/right side octant; d) the left side/front octant; e) the left side/rear octant; and f) the rear/left side octant.

The logos may be substantially uniformly distributed on a) the right side/front octant; b) the right side/rear octant; c) the rear/right side octant; d) the left side/front octant; e) the left side/rear octant; and f) the rear/left side octant.

In one form, the second information is not present on either of the front/right side and front/left side octants.

In one form, the crown has a rear opening and an adjustable strap for changing a configuration of the rear opening to thereby alter an effective size of the headwear piece.

In one form, there is fourth information on the adjustable strap.

The fourth information may identify the event.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a side elevation of one form of headwear piece, according to the present invention, having one form of coordinated information thereon, and with one side of a crown broken away to expose the interior of the other side of the crown;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the headwear piece in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a rear elevation view of the headwear piece in Figs. 1 and 2;

Fig. 4 is a front elevation view of the headwear piece in Figs. 1-3;

Fig. 5 is a schematic, plan representation of the headwear piece in Figs. 1-4 and showing a crown thereon divided into octants;

Fig. 6 is a view as in Fig. 4 of another form of headwear piece, according to the present invention, and having a modified arrangement of information placed thereon;

Fig. 7 is an elevation view of one gore on the crown, including at least one octant on the inventive headwear piece and having information thereon in the form of identifications of participants with the identifications in a normal orientation;

Fig. 8 is a view as in Fig. 7 wherein the identifications are skewed from the normal orientation of Fig. 7;

Fig. 9 is a plan view of an inventive headwear piece, as in Fig. 2, with coordinated information thereon in a different arrangement;

Fig. 10 is a rear elevation view of the inventive headwear piece in Figs. 1-4 with cooperating parts of an adjustable strap, to change the effective size of the headwear piece, in a separated state;

Fig. 11 is a fragmentary, plan view of a modified form of adjustable strap;

Fig. 12 is a fragmentary, cross-sectional view of a part of the crown on the headwear piece, as in Figs. 1-10, and showing the information applied thereto through embroidery;

Fig. 13 is a side elevation view of another form of headwear piece, with information thereon in a coordinated manner, according to the present invention; and

5 Fig. 14 is a perspective view of still another form of headwear piece with information applied in a coordinated manner, according to the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Referring initially to Figs. 1-4, one form of headwear piece, according to the present invention, is shown at 10. The headwear piece 10 is what is conventionally referred to in the art as a baseball-style cap. The headwear piece 10 has a crown 12 defined by a plurality of triangularly-shaped gores 14, sewn edge-to-edge through lines of stitching 16 to produce an inverted, cup-shaped receptacle 18 for the head of a wearer. An inside surface 20, defined by an optional sweatband 22, embraces the wearer's head to maintain the headwear piece 10 in an operative position on the wearer's head.

15 The crown 12 has a front 24, a rear 26, and left and right sides 28, 30, as viewed from the front of the headwear piece 10. A brim/bill 32 projects forwardly from the crown 12. An opening 34 provided at the rear of the crown 12 and is spanned by a strap 36, which is adjustable, as hereinafter described, to vary the

configuration of the opening 34, and thereby the effective size of the headwear piece 10.

As viewed schematically in plan in Fig. 5, the crown 12 is divided into octants. The crown has: a front/right side octant 38; a right side/front octant 40; a right side/rear octant 42; a rear/right side octant 44; a front/left side octant 46; a left side/front octant 48; a left side/rear octant 50; and a rear/left side octant 52, from the perspective of the front of the headwear piece 10.

According to the invention, information, in various forms and type, is strategically located upon the headwear piece 10 in a coordinated manner to convey a different message to an observer, depending upon the user's viewing perspective. As used hereinbelow, "information" is intended to encompass anything that communicates an idea, identification, etc. As just examples, the information can be in the form of words, logos, depictions of animate or inanimate objects, etc.

In one form, as shown in Figs. 1-4, first information, shown at 54, is provided on at least one of the front/right side and front/left side octants 38, 46. In this embodiment, the first information 54 is shown on both of the octants 38, 46, but could be provided on only one of the octants 38, 46. As with all of the other types of "information" described below, the first information 54 is shown in dotted lines in all Figures to represent a generic depiction of any type of information in

virtually any format. As just one example, the first information 54 might be a logo that identifies an event. The logo/information 54 may take virtually any shape or style.

Second information 56 is provided on at least one of the remaining octants 5 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 52. In this embodiment, the second information 56 is provided on each of the other octants 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 52, although this is not required. Again, the second information 56 can be in virtually any format. In one exemplary form, the second information is an identification of each of a plurality of participants in the event. The event could be virtually any event having multiple 10 participants. As just examples, the event might be a school competition, that is either athletic or non-athletic in nature. The event might be a car race, a boxing match, a baseball game, a hockey game, a football game, etc.

For purposes of illustration only, first and second information 54, 56 related to a baseball event will be described. For example, the first information 54 might 15 relate to an all star game at the major league level. The first information 54 might include words or other depictions which, to a perspective purchaser, identify or relate to the all star game. The first information 54 may include, for example, the date of the game, its location, etc.

The second information 56 may include identifications of each of the teams 20 in one or both of the leagues i.e. American/National leagues at the major league

level. In one form, the second information 56 on the headwear piece 10 includes an identification of only those teams in one of the leagues. The one league may be identified by third information 58, that may be provided anywhere on the headwear piece 10, but which is shown on the brim/bill 32 to be viewable in conjunction with the first information 54. The second information 56 may be a logo representing the participants/teams, a word identifying the participants/teams, or other identification that serves this purpose.

With the arrangement depicted, an observer viewing the headwear piece 10, from a front elevation perspective, will see primarily the first information 54 and, if included, as in this embodiment, the third information 58. The second information 56 can be seen but may be unidentifiable/unreadable from a front elevation prospective. That is, it may be seen but the details thereof may be indiscernible. Alternatively, as shown in Fig. 6, on a modified form of headwear piece 10', the second information 56 may be altogether unviewable from the front elevation prospective from which the first information 54, and optional third information 58, can be clearly seen.

With this arrangement, from the front elevation perspective, the event is highlighted by reason of the location of the first information 54 and, if present, the third information 58. This potentially allows the headwear piece 10, 10' to be worn by the actual participants in the game/event. Once the viewing perspective is

changed from the front elevation perspective, the individual team identifications become visible, in the case of the Fig. 6 embodiment, and clearly discernible, in the case of the embodiment in Figs. 1-4. This makes the headwear piece 10, 10' valuable potentially both as a souvenir and as a part of the attire of the 5 players/participants during the game/event.

As shown in Figs. 1-6, the identifications making up the second information 56 may be relatively evenly dispersed in all of the octants 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 52. However, one or more of the identifications of the second information may be provided in one or more of the octants 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 52, to the exclusion of 10 one or more of the other octants 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 52.

Different arrangements of the first information 56 are shown in representative octants, residing substantially within a representative gore 14, in Figs. 7 and 8, in each case in the form of an identification/logo. In Fig. 7, the 15 information/logos 56, which have a normal, upright orientation in which they would normally be situated to be viewed, are shown in the same orientation. In Fig. 8, the information/logos 56 are shown randomly oriented and skewed from their normal orientations. The same arrangement can be provided in each of the octants 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 52 in which the information 56 is provided.

In Fig. 9, another variation of the inventive headwear piece is shown at 10". The headwear piece 10" has the same general arrangement as the headwear 20

piece 10, including a crown 12' and brim/bill 32'. In this embodiment, the first information 54 is provided in the front/left side octant 46 and not in the front/right side octant 38. The second information 56 is shown in three discrete locations, in primarily one of the octants 40, 42. Additional, second information 56 is located at discrete locations primarily at each of the front/left side and front/right side octants 46, 38, respectively. No information is shown on, for example, the octants 44, 48, 50, 52. In this embodiment, the brim/bill 32' has no information thereon.

5 The above-described embodiments are intended to be representative in nature only. Different coordinated arrangements of the first, second and third information 54, 56, 58 are contemplated to convey different information to the 10 potential purchaser depending upon the perspective from which the headwear piece 10, 10', 10'' is viewed.

15 As seen Figs. 3 and 10, the strap 36 may consist of releasably joinable strap parts 60, 62. The strap parts 60, 62 may be joinable selectively to have a variable effective length to change the configuration of the opening 34, and thereby the size of the headwear piece 10. In this embodiment, the strap parts 60, 62 have cooperating hook and loop type fastener portions. As an example, the hook elements 64 may be provided on the strap part 62, with the loop elements 66 provided on the strap part 60.

As an alternative, as shown in Fig. 11, the corresponding strap part 60' may have a post 68 which is selectively directed through spaced openings 70, in a corresponding strap part 62', to produce a modified form of strap 36'.

5 The strap parts 60, 60' have exposed surfaces 72, 72' on which fourth information 76 may be provided. The fourth information 76 may relate to the event so that the event can be identified from a rear elevation perspective view by an observer.

10 As shown in Fig. 12, the first and second information 54, 56 can be defined by embroidery 78 formed directly through the crown 12 at discrete locations on the headwear piece 10. Some, or all, of the information 54, 56, 58 could be applied by other means, i.e. by silk screen printing, sewn patches, labels, etc.

15 A further variation of the inventive headwear is shown at 10"" in Fig. 13. The headwear piece 10"" has a crown 12" that has a similar configuration to the crown 12, but lacks a brim/bill 32. First and second information 54, 56 can be provided thereon in a manner as described above.

20 A further modified form of headwear piece, made according to the present invention, is shown at 10"" in Fig. 14 with a crown 12"" and brim/bill 32"". The headwear piece 10"" is in the form of a visor having an opening 80 through which a wearer's head projects. A surface 82 extends partially, or potentially fully, around a wearer's head to embrace the wearer's head to maintain the headwear

piece 10"" in the operative position. First and second information 54, 56 is provided on the crown 12" as previously described. Optionally, the third information 58 can be provided on the brim/bill 32".

The foregoing disclosure of specific embodiments is intended to be
5 illustrative of the broad concepts comprehended by the invention.